Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) Particles suitable for delivery from a particle-mediated delivery device, wherein the particles are obtained by a method comprising the steps of:

(a) depositing a nucleic acid on inert metal carrier particles in the presence of

(i) a homopolymer of arginine of the formula $(Arg)_x$, wherein x is from 2 to 10, or a physiologically acceptable salt thereof;

(ii) ethylenediamine tetraacetic acid (EDTA); and

(iii) a sugar; and

(b) drying the particles to a powder;

wherein the dried particles have a half life of at least 27 days at 40° C.

2. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 1, wherein the inert metal carrier particles are selected from the group consisting of gold, tungsten, platinum and iridium particles.

3. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 2, wherein the inert metal carrier particles are gold particles having a diameter from about 1 to 3 μm.

4. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid encodes an antigen.

5. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 4, wherein the antigen is selected from the group consisting of viral antigens, bacterial antigens and fungal antigens.

6. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid encodes a therapeutic polypeptide.

7. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid is DNA.

8. - 11. (Cancelled)

12. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 1, wherein the homopolymer of arginine is $(Arg)_4$ or $(Arg)_6$.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 1, wherein the sugar is one or more disaccharide and/or trisaccharide sugars.

15. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 14, wherein the one or more sugars is selected from the group consisting of trehalose, sucrose, lactose and raffinose.

16. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 15, wherein the one or more sugars is a blend of sucrose and raffinose.

17. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 1, wherein the depositing step is carried out in the presence of one or more salts.

18. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 17, wherein the salt is selected from the group consisting of potassium acetate, calcium chloride, lithium chloride, sodium acetate, magnesium nitrate, sodium citrate, sodium phosphate and magnesium chloride.

19. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 1, wherein the resultant particles are contacted with an antioxidant.

20. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 19, wherein the antioxidant is selected from the group consisting of ethanol, vitamin A, vitamin C and vitamin E.

21. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 1, wherein the sugar comprises sucrose.

22. (Previously Presented) A dosage receptacle for a particle-mediated delivery device, the receptacle containing the particles of claim 1.

23. (Previously Presented) A particle mediated delivery device loaded with the particles of claim 1.

24. (Previously Presented) The particle mediated delivery device of claim 23 which is a needleless syringe.

25. (Previously Presented) A process for preparing the particles of claim 1, comprising

(i) depositing a nucleic acid on inert metal carrier particles in the presence of

(a) a homopolymer of arginine of the formula $(Arg)_x$, wherein x is from 2 to 10, or a physiologically acceptable salt thereof;

(b) ethylenediamine tetraacetic acid (EDTA); and

(c) a sugar; and

(ii) drying the particles to a powder;

wherein the dried particles have a half life of at least 27 days at 40° C.

26. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 25, wherein the homopolymer of arginine is added in step (i) to a mixture comprising the inert metal carrier particles and the nucleic acid.

27. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 25, wherein the inert metal carrier particles are selected from the group consisting of gold, tungsten, platinum and iridium particles.

28. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 27, wherein the inert metal carrier particles are gold particles having a diameter from about 1 to 3 μm.

29. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 25, wherein the nucleic acid encodes an antigen.

30. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 29, wherein the antigen is selected from the group consisting of viral antigens, bacterial antigens and fungal antigens.

31. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 25, wherein the nucleic acid encodes a therapeutic polypeptide.

32. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 25, wherein the nucleic acid is DNA.

33. - 36. (Cancelled)

37. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 25, wherein the homopolymer of arginine is $(Arg)_4$ or $(Arg)_6$.

38. (Cancelled)

39. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 25, wherein the sugar is one or more disaccharide and/or trisaccharide sugars.

40. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 39, wherein the one or more sugars is selected from the group consisting of trehalose, sucrose, lactose and raffinose.

41. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 40, wherein the one or more sugars is a blend of sucrose and raffinose.

42. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 25, wherein step (i) is further carried out in the presence of one or more salts.

43. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 42, wherein the one or more salts is selected from the group consisting of potassium acetate, calcium chloride, lithium

chloride, sodium acetate, magnesium nitrate, sodium citrate, sodium phosphate and magnesium chloride.

44. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 25, wherein the resultant particles from step (i) are contacted with an antioxidant.

45. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 44, wherein the antioxidant is selected from the group consisting of ethanol, vitamin A, vitamin C and vitamin E.

46. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 25, and the sugar comprises sucrose.

47. - 66. (Cancelled)

67. (Previously Presented) Particles, suitable for delivery from a particle mediated delivery device, which comprise inert metal carrier particles comprising on their surface:

(i) a nucleic acid,

(ii) a homopolymer of arginine of the formula $(Arg)_x$, wherein x is from 2 to 10, or a physiologically acceptably salt thereof, and

(iii) ethylenediamine tetraacetic acid (EDTA);

wherein the particles are dried to a powder and have a half life of at least 27 days at 40° C.

68. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 5, wherein the antigen is a human papilloma virus antigen.

69. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 5, wherein the antigen is a HIV antigen.

70. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 5, wherein the antigen is a HSV2 or HSV1 antigen.

71. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 5, wherein the antigen is a hepatitis B virus antigen.

72. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 5, wherein the antigen is an influenza virus antigen.

73. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 12, wherein the homopolymer of arginine is $(Arg)_4$.

74. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim of claim 1, wherein the sugar ~~is~~ comprises trehalose.

75. (Cancelled)

76. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 30, wherein the antigen is an influenza virus antigen.

77. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 40, wherein the one or more sugars is trehalose.

78. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 25, wherein the sugar comprises trehalose.

79. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 37, wherein the homopolymer of arginine is $(Arg)_4$.

80. - 81. (Cancelled).

82. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 67, wherein the homopolymer of arginine is $(Arg)_4$ or $(Arg)_6$.

83. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 67, wherein the homopolymer of arginine is $(Arg)_4$.

84. (Cancelled).

85. (Previously Presented) Particles suitable for delivery from a particle-mediated delivery device, wherein the particles are obtained by a method comprising the steps of:

(a) depositing a nucleic acid on inert metal carrier particles in the presence of

(i) a homopolymer of arginine of the formula $(Arg)_x$, wherein x is from 2 to 10, or a physiologically acceptable salt thereof;

(ii) a metal ion chelating agent; and

(iii) a sugar;

wherein (1) the metal ion chelating agent is ethylenediamine tetraacetic acid (EDTA), or (2) the sugar comprises sucrose, or both (1) and (2); and

(b) drying the particles to a powder;

wherein the dried particles have a half life of at least 27 days at 40° C.

86. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 85, wherein the sugar comprises sucrose, and the metal ion chelating agent is selected from the group consisting of ethylenediamine tetraacetic acid (EDTA) diethylenetriamine penta-acetic acid (DTPA), nitrilotriacetic acid (NTA), inositol hexaphosphate, tripolyphosphate, polyphosphoric acid, sodium succinate, potassium succinate, lithium succinate, sodium malate, potassium malate, lithium malate, desferal and ethylenediamine-di (o-hydroxy-phenylacetic) acid (EDDHA).

87. (Previously Presented) The particles of claim 67, wherein the inert metal carrier particles further comprise on their surface a sugar comprising sucrose, trehalose or both.

88. (New) A process for preparing and storing particles suitable for delivery from a particle-mediated delivery device, comprising:

(i) depositing a nucleic acid on inert metal carrier particles in the presence of a least:

(a) a homopolymer of arginine of the formula $(Arg)_x$, wherein x is from 2 to 10, or a physiologically acceptable salt thereof;

(b) a metal ion chelating agent selected from the group consisting of ethylenediamine tetraacetic acid (EDTA) and diethylenetriamine penta-acetic acid (DTPA); and

(c) a sugar;

(ii) drying the particles to a powder; and

(iii) storing the dried particles as a powder for at least 7 days before delivery from a particle-mediated delivery device;

wherein the particles are particles suitable for delivery from a particle-mediated delivery device.

89. (New) The process of claim 88, wherein the dried particles are stored at a temperature in the range of about 4 °C to about 60 °C for at least 7 days before delivery from a particle-mediated delivery device.

90. (New) The process of claim 88, wherein the dried particles are stored for at least 14 days before delivery from a particle-mediated delivery device.

91. (New) The process of claim 88, wherein the dried particles are stored for at least 8 weeks before delivery from a particle-mediated delivery device.

92. (New) The process of claim 88, wherein the metal ion chelating agent is EDTA.

93. (New) The process of claim 88, wherein the sugar is trehalose or sucrose.

94. (New) Particles suitable for delivery from a particle mediated delivery device, wherein the particles comprise:

(i) an inert metal carrier particle;

(ii) a nucleic acid;

(iii) a homopolymer of arginine of the formula $(Arg)_x$, wherein x is from 2 to 10, or a physiologically acceptably salt thereof; and

(iv) a metal ion chelating agent selected from the group consisting of ethylenediamine tetraacetic acid (EDTA) and diethylenetriamine penta-acetic acid (DTPA); and

(v) a sugar;

wherein the particles are dried to a powder; and

wherein the dried particles are stored as a powder for at least 7 days.

95. (New) Particles suitable for delivery from a particle mediated delivery device, wherein the particles are prepared and stored according to the method of claim 88.